

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 322—RECOGNIZING THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE REFUSAL OF ROSA LOUISE PARKS TO GIVE UP HER SEAT ON A BUS ON DECEMBER 1, 1955

Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. PETERS, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. LEAHY, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. NELSON, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. WARNER, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. KAINE, Mr. REID, Mr. COCHRAN, and Mr. SASSE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 322

Whereas many historians date the beginning of the modern civil rights movement in the United States as December 1, 1955;

Whereas Rosa Louise McCauley Parks was born on February 4, 1913, in Tuskegee, Alabama, the first child of James and Leona (Edwards) McCauley;

Whereas Rosa Louise Parks was arrested on December 1, 1955, in Montgomery, Alabama, for refusing to give up her seat on a bus to a Caucasian man, and her stand for equal rights became legendary;

Whereas news of the arrest of Rosa Louise Parks resulted in approximately 42,000 African-Americans boycotting Montgomery buses for 381 days, beginning on December 5, 1955, until the bus segregation law was changed on December 21, 1956;

Whereas the United States Supreme Court ruled on November 13, 1956, that the Montgomery segregation law was unconstitutional, and on December 20, 1956, Montgomery officials were ordered to desegregate buses;

Whereas the civil rights movement led to the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which broke down the barrier of legal discrimination against African-Americans;

Whereas Rosa Louise Parks has been honored as the “first lady of civil rights” and the “mother of the freedom movement”, and her quiet dignity ignited the most significant social movement in the history of the United States;

Whereas Rosa Louise Parks was the recipient of many awards and accolades for her efforts on behalf of racial harmony, including—

- (1) the Congressional Gold Medal;
- (2) the Spingarn Award, which is the highest honor of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People for civil rights contributions; and
- (3) the Presidential Medal of Freedom, which is the highest civilian honor in the United States;

Whereas Rosa Louise Parks was named 1 of the 20 most influential and iconic figures of the 20th century;

Whereas Rosa Louise Parks sparked 1 of the largest movements in the United States against racial segregation, and by her quiet courage symbolizes all that is vital about nonviolent protest because of the way she endured threats of death and persisted as an advocate for the basic lessons she taught the people of the United States;

Whereas Rosa Louise Parks and her husband Raymond Parks relocated to Michigan in 1957, and remained in Michigan until the death of Rosa Louise Parks on October 24, 2005;

Whereas, in November 2005, Congress authorized the Joint Committee on the Library to procure a statue of Rosa Louise Parks to be placed in the Capitol; and

Whereas the bus on which Rosa Louise Parks sparked a new era in the quest for

freedom and equality in the United States is—

(1) 1 of the most significant artifacts of the civil rights movement in the United States; and

(2) on permanent display in the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, Michigan: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes and celebrates the 60th anniversary of the refusal of Rosa Louise Parks to give up her seat on a bus on December 1, 1955;

(2) commemorates the legacy of Rosa Louise Parks to inspire all people of the United States to stand up for freedom and the principles of the Constitution; and

(3) endeavors to work with the same courage, dignity, and determination exemplified by a civil rights pioneer, Rosa Louise Parks, to address modern inequalities and injustices.

Mr. DURBIN. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COATS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Gayle Smith, of Ohio, to be Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 30 minutes of debate, equally divided in the usual form.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, 2 months ago I came to the Senate floor to urge the majority leader to schedule a vote on the nomination of Gayle Smith to serve as Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development, also known as USAID. Here we are, 7 months after the President nominated her to fill this position. The Senate will have a chance in a few minutes to vote on Gayle Smith's nomination to head USAID.

I fully expect that today's vote will lead to her confirmation. We are witnessing a humanitarian crisis in Syria and across the Middle East that grows worse by the day, posing a risk to European stability and cohesion. Having someone at the head of USAID is absolutely critical. The United States, with

our unparalleled capacity to mobilize international support for humanitarian relief, should continue to play a leading role in assisting both Syrian refugees and the neighboring countries that are hosting them.

Having an effective leader such as Gayle Smith at USAID is a critical part of that effort. Last month I had the opportunity to lead a delegation of three other Senators to Greece and Germany. Senator DURBIN, Senator WARREN, Senator KLOBUCHAR, and I all went to see firsthand the plight of refugees from the war in Syria and the incredible burden that both Greece and Germany are under as a result of these unprecedented refugee flows.

Many of us—and we heard this when we were in Greece—believed that the rate of refugee arrivals would slow with the coming of cold weather. In fact, the exact opposite has happened, and the humanitarian situation has only become worse.

Of course, USAID's work is not only limited to the situation in Syria; it extends to the 60 countries and regional USAID missions around the world, including in Afghanistan, where USAID development work is critical to the long-term success and security of that country.

I am relieved that we are finally going to get to vote on Gayle Smith and that the majority has overcome the objections of the one Member who, for the last 7 months, has been holding up her nomination. That Member was willing to put at risk the massive investment of resources the United States has made in Afghanistan and other parts of the world just to score political points on an issue that was completely outside of Gayle Smith's portfolio at USAID.

As things have moved on Gayle Smith, I am hoping this type of obstruction is going to end, and we will soon vote not only on Ms. Smith's nomination but also to confirm other critical national security nominees, especially the pending Foreign Service nominations that have been approved by the Foreign Relations Committee and that could be voted on by the full Senate today.

For example, in May the President nominated Tom Melia to be Assistant Administrator for USAID for Europe and Eurasia. This is a critical position not only because of the development work but because these are two regions that are under extreme pressure from Vladimir Putin. These regions would both benefit from USAID programs that would bolster their ability to act independently of Russian influence. Tom Melia is still unconfirmed, despite the fact that the Foreign Relations Committee approved his nomination in July. In addition, the nominee to serve as U.S. Ambassador to Sweden has been pending for over a year. Sweden has become a much more critical ally in terms of the refugee issue that Europe is facing. The nominee to serve as U.S. Ambassador to Norway—again another critical ally—has been pending